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SHARING OUR SECRETS

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Abstract

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Title: Sharing Our Secrets

Abstract: Customer satisfaction is one of the objectives of the Chief's National Recreation Strategy. In an attempt to meet that objective, this paper identifies recreation trends and marketing needs for development and distribution of a Primitive Recreation map for the Marcell Ranger District. The District has unique areas known statewide and user demand reflects their popularity. However, other unique areas are not being utilized. The District strives to disperse use to reduce negative impacts caused by overuse in some areas while emphasizing use in other areas.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Interpretive Services, Primitive Recreation.

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Executive Summary

Title: Sharing Our Secrets

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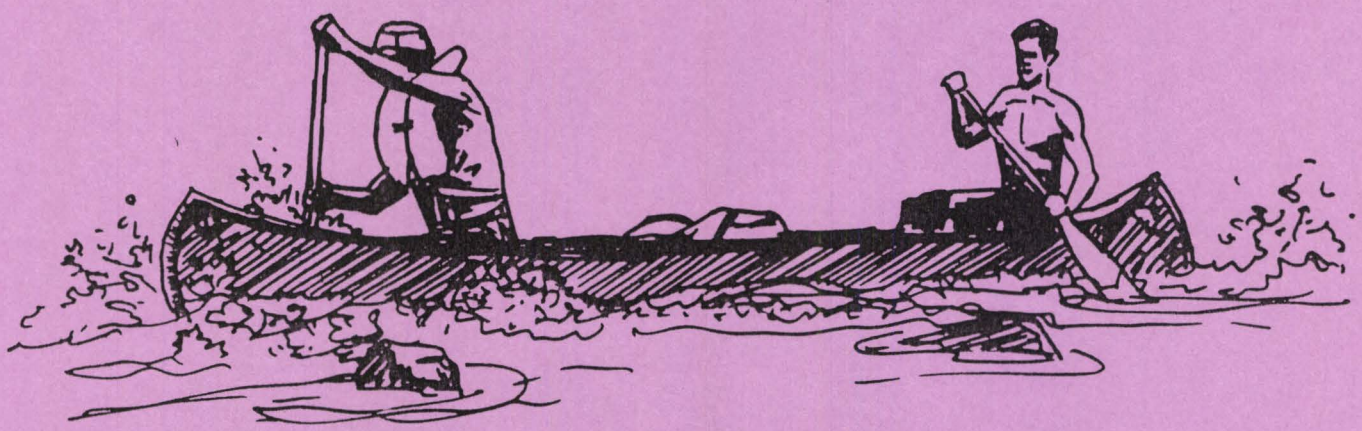
Summary: The Marcell Ranger District has secrets to share with its stockholders! Unique areas little known to the public. Highlighting these special areas will enhance our image as a responsible land managing agency, and promote tourism in our locale. The result of this endeavor will be a map showing recreation opportunities available in the District as well as noting user expectations so those interested in recreation in our area have equal opportunities.

Tourism is a major generator of income in northern Minnesota. A 60% increase in recreation use is predicted in the North Central Minnesota lakes region from 1985 to 2000. Review of literature focused on understanding current demand, identifying trends and user demographics, application of marketing concepts and identifying successes elsewhere.

The Grand Rapids Area Visitors and Convention Bureau markets the area's attributes rather than one specific recreational experience. Minnesota National Forests should use this technique to increase public awareness of the benefits of forest camping with emphasis on self-reliance, natural appearing sites, proximity to lakes and rivers, solitude and self-guided nature observations. Marketing should be focused on the "close-to-nature solitude" theme.

The District has individual fliers on specific areas, but some opportunities such as lake access type and species of fish available are occasionally missed. Development of a two-sided map consolidating recreation opportunities, including all public ownerships, will share our secrets with all National Forest stock holders. One side will be a District map showing recreation opportunities and the other side site specific maps, sketches, ethics, and expectations. The use of newsprint with three or four color combinations, will result in an economical product that is easily updated. It would also be distributed to the public free of charge.

Introduction



Chapter 1 - INTRODUCTION

Study Area

Minnesota is known nationwide, perhaps worldwide, as the "Land of Sky-Blue Waters." The "Land of 10,000 Lakes" Minnesota actually contains 12,034 lakes, 25,000 miles of streams and rivers, as well as 17 million acres of forest land. The Chippewa National Forest (see figure 1) is located in the heart of lake country and, proudly encompasses many of the "10,000 lakes" for which the State is known. Tourism, along with wood products, is the primary economic basis for the area.

The Marcell Ranger District, located in the eastern-most portion of the Chippewa in Itasca County, (see figure 1), is home to over 278 lakes. Recreational use of the area began as access improved in support of the timber resource which is an important economic basis for the area. Recreational development steadily increased in the 1960's and 1970's, to the point where most of the desirable lakeshore lots are presently occupied by an improvement of some sort.

The Continental Divide, between the Hudson's Bay and Mississippi River watersheds, lies in an east to west formation in the southern third of the Marcell District. Water runs north or south with many lakes lacking inlets or outlets. Because this area is at the headwaters of various drainages, there are only two rivers (Rice and Big Fork) that are navigable. Recreational use is, therefore, typically associated with the 278 lakes in the area.

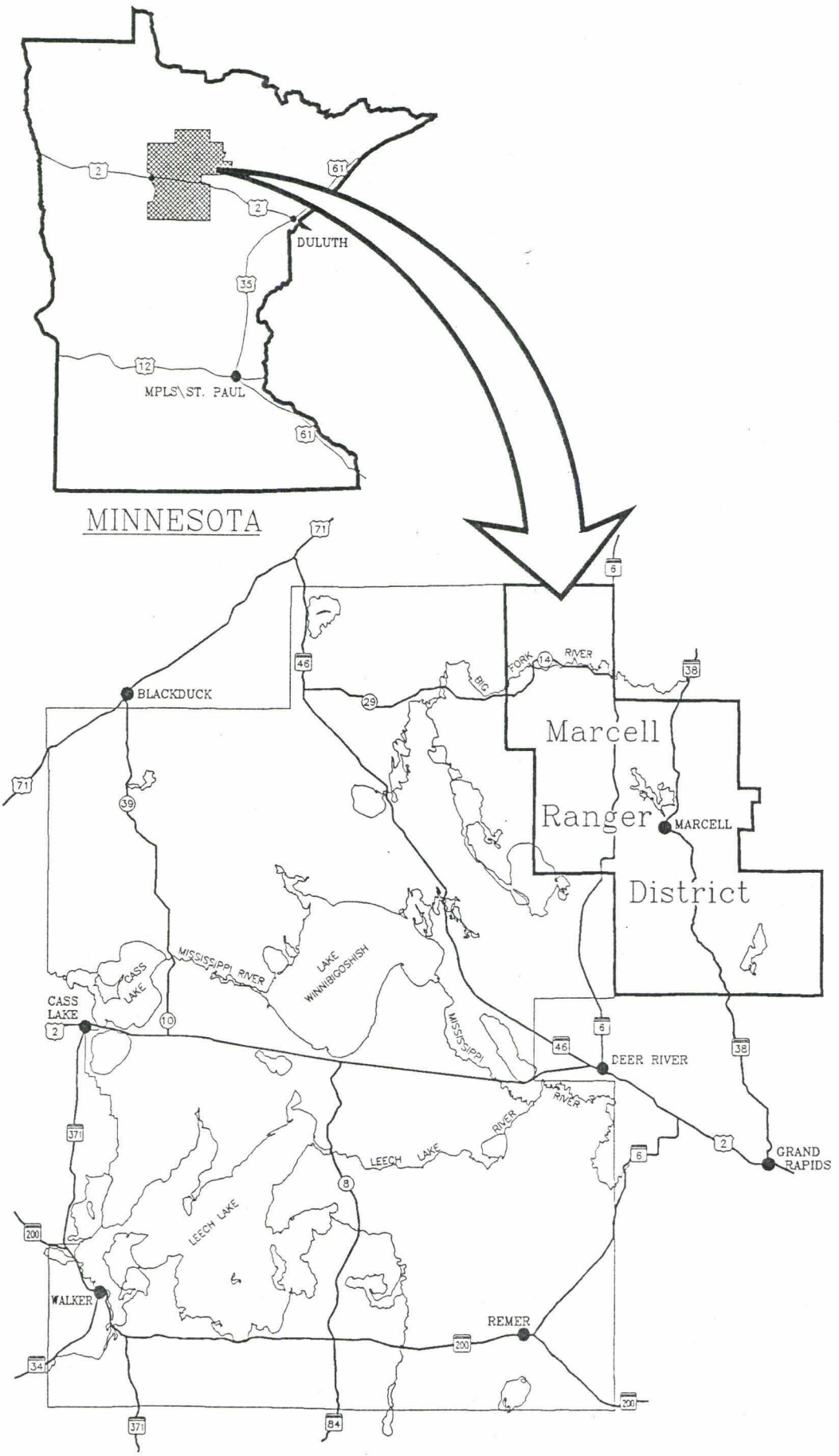
The recreation resource of the Marcell District remains relatively "untapped," with only two major campgrounds (Clubhouse and North Star) containing 85 spurs. Use of these campgrounds is considered moderate. The District has over 300 undeveloped sites, either primitive campsites, lunch spots, or water accesses. While the primitive campsites offer a variety of conveniences from a wilderness latrine, fire-ring, tent pad and a picnic table at some of the highly used areas, to rock fire-ring and "dig-your-own-latrine" at others, the lunch spots consist mainly of lakeshore sites used for years by area fishing guides as a place for their clients to stretch their muscles while guides fry up some fresh fish. These lunch spots normally contain a rock fire-ring only. Water accesses, on the other hand, are either: (1) concrete ramps that extend both in and out of the water, (2) user developed earth ramps, (3) carry-in sites where trailers cannot be backed into the water and (4)

portages. Many of these sites and associated lakes are secrets known only by area residents and their friends.

The Marcell District is mostly roaded natural or roaded modified in terms of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum, with approximately 10% of the area in a semiprimitive nonmotorized setting (SPNM). The Marcell District contains the only SPNM area on the Chippewa, with 6,000 acres each in Suomi Hills and Trout Lake. These two areas contain 15 primitive campsites, 31 miles of trail for hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, horse back riding and the historic Joyce Estate; A site that will soon be on the Register for National Historic Sites. The Marcell District also has 55 miles of snowmobile trails maintained by local clubs as part of their grant-in-aid trail network.

The Big Fork River canoe route, a route of 166 miles, 16 of which is in Marcell, and the Rice River canoe route, a route of 20 miles, both meander through old growth forested stands of timber and homesteads. Wildlife viewing, solitude, and canoeing in an uncrowded, semiprimitive setting are the primary attractions.

The Marcell District signs and maintains a 42-mile Fall Color Tour, a 17-mile Self-Guided Auto Tour, and 17 miles of hunter walking trails in three different areas, providing excellent opportunities to view wildlife. East Lake Pines, a biotic area and home to majestic 250-year-old red pine, and Miller Lake, a geologic area known as the disappearing lake, are special areas known by few. The 25-mile portion of Highway 38 on the Marcell District is known locally as the Northwoods Scenic Byway which is part of the Forest Service National Scenic Byway Program.


DULUTH
MPLS\ST. PAUL
MINNESOTA
BLACKDUCK
Marcell
Ranger
District
MARCELL
BIG FORK RIVER
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
CASS LAKE
LAKE WINNIBIGOSHISH
CASS LAKE
DEER RIVER
MISSISSIPPI
RIVER
LEECH LAKE
LEECH LAKE
RIVER
GRAND RAPIDS
WALKER
REMER
CHIPPEWA NATIONAL FOREST

Purpose of Study

As identified in the Land Management Plan of 1986 and the Forest Interpretive Guide of 1987, one objective of the Forest's Interpretive Services is "to help visitors know and experience the natural environment." These references also state that visitor needs for information can be met through maps and publications.

Ensuring "customer satisfaction" is one of the primary goals of the National Recreation Strategy. Providing the informational tools necessary to meet customer needs by outlining available opportunities will aid in building customers satisfaction.

Visitors to the Marcell Ranger District frequently inquire about the various recreation opportunities the District has to offer. The Recreation Opportunity Guide (ROG) has been a useful document to respond to these requests. However, only individuals who request additional information will gain from the ROG, since the ROG is a desk guide.

Specific objectives of this study include:

- Determine demands and recreation trends and how they apply to the Marcell District.
- Develop a means to visually display all recreation opportunities to users.
- Review marketing concept to aid in promotion.
- Identify procurement needed for printing of a map.

Literature Review

Chapter II - LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review was conducted to gain greater familiarity with marketing, trends, customer expectations, and currently successful tactics.

Specific objectives of the literature review were to:

- Review the marketing concept and apply to our needs.
- Identify trends and user demographics (to know our clients.)
- Understand current demand.
- Identify successful projects in other areas and agencies.

Sources of publications:

FS-INFO - A computerized literature search
Itasca Community College Library
North Central Forest Experiment Station - Grand Rapids, MN
Clemson Short Course lecture and handouts
Forest Service internal documents
Voyageurs National Park and Superior National Forest
Libraries of the Marcell Ranger District, the Supervisor's Office of the Chippewa National Forest, and the City of Bigfork.
Personal contacts with public agencies, lake owners associations, resort owners, local governments, and work associates to determine their support and suggestions to the proposed project.

Overview - Demand & Trends

The 1990 RPA assessment provides several determinants of demand for outdoor recreation. The demand for all recreation is expected to continue to increase over the next 50 years. Land based activities will increase from 53 to 80 percent, water based activities will increase from 20 to 45 percent, and snow and ice based activities will increase from 26 to more than 200 percent (RPA-1990). This document goes on to state that the capabilities of wildlife and fish habitats on National Forest System lands will be increased to provide more hunting, fishing, and nonconsumptive use experiences, such as watching birds and other wildlife. The RPA, 1995 update, also indicates that future emphasis will focus on dispersed recreation opportunities not generally provided in other sectors (RPA-1989). The 1990 assessment emphasizes balanced recreation opportunities including dispersed recreation and wilderness opportunities and developed sites (RPA-1990).

The projected growth for the Minnesota "tourist" and Non-Minnesotan tourist is shown in Appendix A. This figure reveals that Itasca County is in an area of maximum growth as a destination area. When comparing expenditures of tourists, this area also receives the largest share of all travel expenditures for the entire state. Recreation for all tourists increases substantially in the areas of fishing, camping, boating and driving for pleasure.

Nonresident vacation activities tend to be more centered on water, which is similar to Minnesotan activities while on vacation in-state. The most popular nonresident activities are fishing, camping (near water), swimming and boating with the most common destinations being the northern Minnesota forest areas with water (SCORP, 1990).

A 60% increase in total recreation use by both residents and nonresidents is predicted in the North Central Minnesota lakes area (1985 to 2000). SCORP and RPA conclude that vacations will be increasingly planned around long holiday weekends and thus people pressure will tax recreational facilities during short periods. The "Needs Assessment of Tourism Firms Serving the BWCA Wilderness Vicinity in 1980" indicated that tourism is a major generator of economic base in the area (Blank, 1980). The study indicated that a national market exists for the recreational/vacation experiences available in the area. Strengths include woods and water outside the BWCA, and the urbanized communities in the vicinity. The study concluded by suggesting that State and Federal agencies that administer the public resource could provide economic stability through new efforts to

assist in recreation resource management and targeted public marketing. The BWCA has been the drawing card for years, but it is the surrounding lake regions of Minnesota that will take over in the years to come.

The Minnesota Camping Market Strategy (Nelson, 1991) states that 73% of campers are residents, while 40% are new to the area. Campers desire seclusion, natural surroundings and more features than services. This study also stated that nonresidents were generally from Iowa, North Dakota and Manitoba. This study concluded that the Minnesota National Forests should focus their marketing efforts at the "close-to-nature solitude" market segment. The National Forest needs to increase the awareness of the benefits of forest camping with emphasis on self-reliance, natural appearance of sites, proximity to lakes and rivers, few facilities provided, with solitude and self-guided nature observations.

The Grand Rapids Area Visitor and Convention Bureau (VCB) places emphasis on tourism for the North Central Minnesota area it represents, and markets the area's attributes rather than one specific recreational experience. The VCB believes strongly that visitors, as well as local users, truly value the outdoor qualities of aesthetics, wildlife, exercise, photography and a host of other activities besides the excellent fishing the area historically offers.

Marketing

The Forest Service's goal in managing outdoor recreation on NFS lands is to provide a variety of recreational experiences in a natural setting that offers a contrast to urbanization (Forest Service, 1987). The Marcell Ranger District offers a variety of recreational experiences, but marketing available opportunities must be emphasized.

The Forest Service product in recreation is service (Syme, 1987). The objective of the National Recreation Strategy is a satisfied customer. How do we market our product and create a satisfied customer?

The marketing concept has two components:

- Customer Orientation - Who are our customers? What do our customers need? Who are the groups with the common needs (segmentation)? What mix of services are offered to satisfy those needs? What leads to customer satisfaction?

- Organizational Commitment - Satisfied employees lead to satisfied customers, emphasize internal as well as external marketing.

The marketing mix is our offering that responds to the needs of the customers as well as meeting District objectives. The marketing mix is generally referred to as the 7 P's: product, place, price, promotion, participants, physical evidence and process of service (Syme, 1987). The most important P's are promotion, participants and physical evidence.

- Promotion - The strategy of promotion is to inform, educate, persuade and/or remind. This is accomplished by advertising through mass media brochures/ publications or even word of mouth. Word of mouth is used most often and sometimes the most effective (either good or bad).

- Participants - This is the customer contact i.e., every District employee. There is never a second chance to make a good first impression. Customer satisfaction = customer service, and all District employees have customer service responsibilities.

- Physical Evidence - This is the total environment surrounding the service. It is the "packaging" of the recreation opportunities being offered. This not only includes such things as cleanliness and signing, but also Forest Service employees who are encountered during the recreation activity and also become part of the recreation experience. The image portrayed by the Forest Service is the image our customers take home to share with their friends. This image lingers in their experience and impacts our organization.

Tried and Tested Techniques in Other Areas

The Superior National Forest in Minnesota has developed 8 1/2 x 11 informational flyers for dispersed sites in specific areas; for example, like a chain of two or three lakes. Information thus provided seems to be appropriate for the area with enough detail to ensure sites can be located. These are available free of charge.

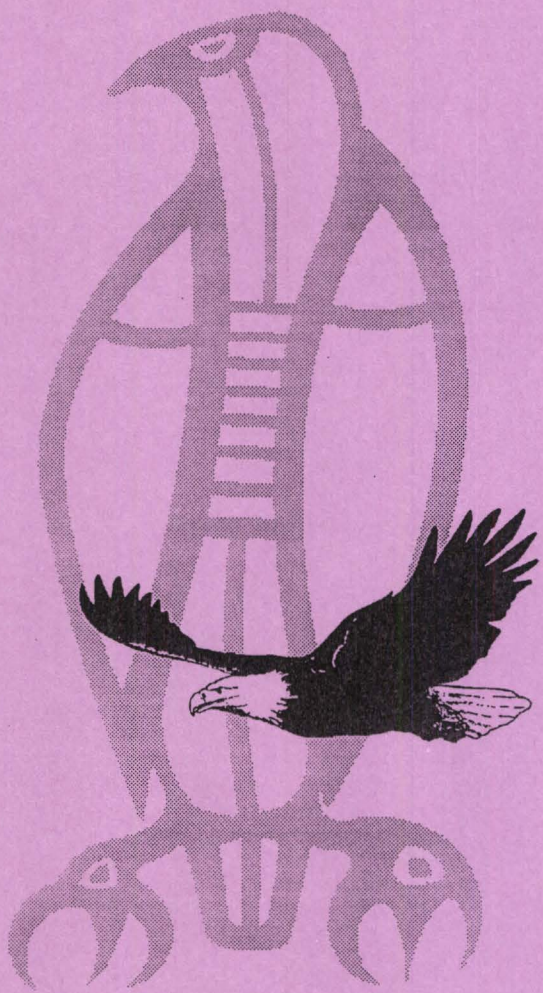
The Sumter National Forest in South Carolina has developed a high quality, colorful, folded trail guide map. Information provided seems to be appropriate for the area as it provides the necessary information to ensure a quality experience. These maps are available for $4.49 each.

The Minnesota DNR has published the Public Recreation Information Maps (PRIM). The seven color maps indicate ownership as well as types of accesses available and camp-sites. These high quality maps are available for $3.95 each.

The Voyageurs National Park in Minnesota has the Park Service standard brochure labeled "Official Map and Guide." Since all campsites are water accessed only, the scale is adequate to ensure usability. Additional 8 1/2 x 11 fliers are available to provide users with pertinent camping and canoeing information. These are all free publications. Voyageurs also published a tabloid-size newspaper for the 1992-1993 season that contains the entire map of the park as well as pertinent user information to ensure customer satisfaction. This newspaper has excellent quality, good map resolution and is available free.

The North Central Experiment Station has a service for the conversion of publications into braille free of charge. The contact is Roger Audette, USDA Forest Service, St. Paul, MN. (612) 649-5143. D.G. address is R. Audette:S23A.

Methodology



Chapter III - METHODOLOGY

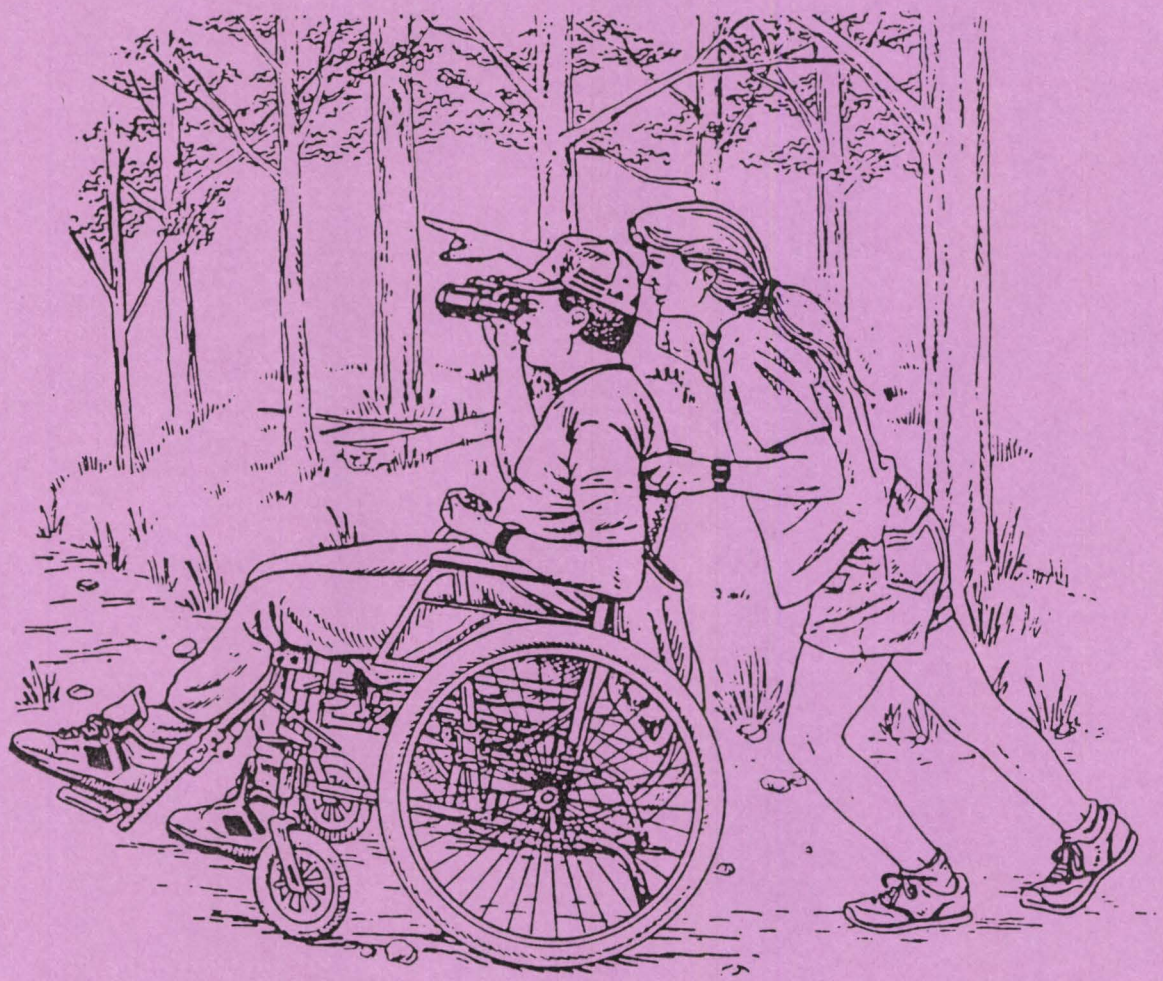
The challenges described in the introduction and purpose section of this report led to this project proposal. Areas of analysis needed to decide the format of the product are:

- Projected use levels and demographics
- Marketing initiative
- Cost of development
- Distribution

This project was endorsed by the Marcell District Ranger, the Chippewa National Forest Recreation Specialist and Landscape Architect, Marcell District Receptionist and Recreation Technicians, Itasca County Resort and Tourism Association, several Area Lake Landowners Associations as well as numerous other interested individuals.

A literature review provided current demand and projected use as well as tried and tested techniques in other areas. Meetings with the Spider Lake, Chain-of-Lakes, and North Star Landowners Associations, as well as several area resorts, indicated overwhelming support to initiate the project. Discussions with Minnesota DNR, Itasca County and Chippewa National Forest employees resulted in support of the project and total concurrences of need.

Discussion



Chapter IV - DISCUSSION

Trends

The various RPA assessments set the stage for outdoor recreation. The trends and projected demands however, place a greater strain on our better-known areas since customers may not be aware of other areas. Since the area has 4 reasons of use, dispersal of recreation use over all the seasons will ensure quality experiences while reducing the resource impact of large numbers of people over a short time period. Through the literature review, a determination has been made who most of our customers are, where the customers are coming from and that 40% of the customers are new to the area. An additional determination is that customer satisfaction is job Number 1. Finally, one means of marketing services is through promotion with maps or publications.

Information covering most of the District recreation opportunities are available in the District office. Customers can easily leave the office with 15 to 20 different brochures, fliers, maps, etc., covering various areas of their interests. However, these same customers will have difficulty obtaining a map showing access to a smaller, more secluded, lake. In addition, customers may not know the type of access it has nor the species of fish available.

Marketing

The major ingredients in any marketing effort are the participants. The participants here are the customers and the Forest Service employees. Knowledgeable Forest Service employees help create a happy, satisfied customer. Both participants must be satisfied to ensure overall customer satisfaction.

A means to this end is to develop a "one-stop shop." This will be a map consolidating all recreation opportunities in the Marcell District covering all public ownerships. This will prove useful to employees to quickly locate the opportunities available. In this way, the employee becomes a positive tool for the Forest Service.

This map must be accessible to all potential customers. Discussions with several front line employees indicated that most people are not willing to pay for information. The map,

therefore, must be free of charge, be of good quality, be attractive, and be the first item a customer reaches for from a display rack. The map must be a positive reflection of the Forest Service.

Development

Two viable options for printing have been examined. Both options require camera ready layout and artwork with procurement via Government Printing Office through the Supervisor's Office procurement staff. The options are:

- A four color, 2-sided map about 24" x 32" on 60# white offset semi-gloss finish folded to 8x12 - $1390 for 2000 maps. This estimate is based on sketches or clip art - no color photos. Color photos are additional. This quote is from a printing firm in Grand Rapids, MN.

- Four color, 2-sided map about 24" x 32" on newsprint folded to 8x12 - $300 for 2000 maps. This quote is from the Grand Rapids Herald Review.

Distribution

Distribution of the map will likely follow several avenues. The Marcell-Bigfork-Effie communities annually publish the "Edge-of-the-Wilderness" newspaper that is distributed locally to area businesses, chambers of commerce, and resorts, as well as statewide through the Minnesota Office of Tourism. It is available free with an estimated 10,000 copies distributed annually. Discussions with personnel associated with the Edge-of-the-Wilderness newspaper indicate that including this map in the newspaper is a feasible distribution option.

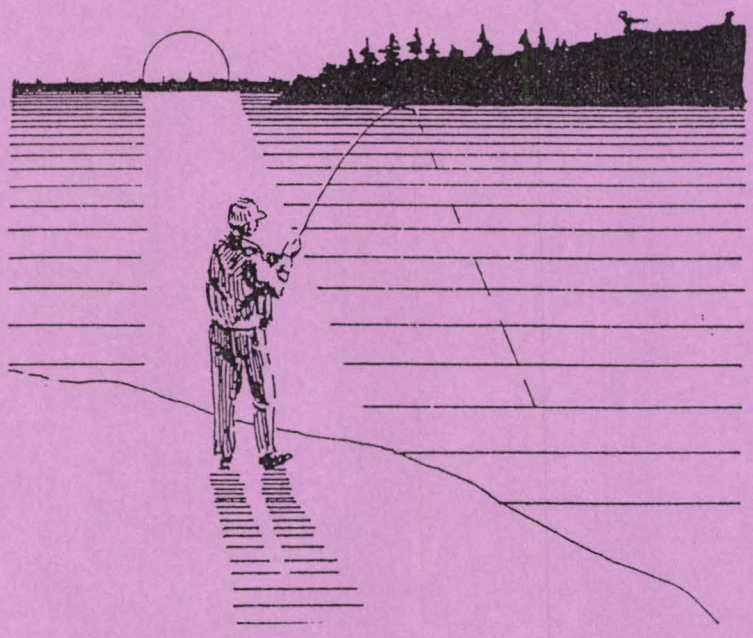
The Marcell District maintains several flier dispenser boxes at trail heads at special features such as the Fall Color Tour, Suomi and Trout Lake Recreation Areas and the District office kiosk. Self-service dispensers could also be available at the Laurentian Divide Wayside, Marcell Town Hall kiosk and Bigfork village entrance area.

Word of mouth (good experiences) has been found to be the most successful promotional tool in Minnesota (Nelson, 1991). Nelson also goes on to state that local businesses and chambers of commerce are underutilized in promoting our services ie. make maps avail-

able for these locations. Discussions with area resorts reveal the willingness to display self-service dispensers at these businesses.

An often overlooked method to disseminate information are familiarization tours for campground hosts, Resort and Tourism Association, Chamber of Commerce, and District employees.

Recommendation



Chapter V - RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Product

Resource degradation such as soil compaction, loss of vegetation, and shoreline erosion is occurring at several primitive sites that are widley known. Management must either rest some of these over-used sites by closure or by diverting some of these users to primitive sites that are secrets. Dispersing use will help alleviate resource impacts caused by large numbers over a short period as well as insuring quality experiences resulting in customer satisfaction.

Development of a map showing all recreation opportunities on one side and site specific maps, sketches, ethics and expectations on the other side will aid in dispersal of use. This must be a top quality yet economically sound publication which attains maximum distribution free of charge. Newsprint meets these criteria and is recommended. Side one of the map will contain the following:

1. A usable, readable map, with a scale of 1" = 1 mile resulting in a 24" x 32" map. This scale will allow for detail and appropriate print size.

2. An avoidance of topographic features to avoid clutter.

3. An inclusion of all public recreation opportunities as well as public ownership within the Marcell Ranger District.

4. A suggested color combination of dark blue lakes, light blue rivers and streams, with print and features black. This should result in a good combination for the visually impaired.

5. A statement that 18 point large print and braille is available upon request.

6. Specific opportunities to be shown:

Primitive Campsites (trail access)
Primitive Campsites (water access)
Ramp (concrete or native soil)
Carry-in Access
Portage Access
Hiking Trails
Suomi
Trout Lake
Hunter Walking Trails
Self-guided Auto Tour
Fall Color Tour
Snowmobile Trails
Continental Divide Wayside
Ranger Station
Scenic Byway
East Lake Biotic Area
Miller lake Geologic Area
Bigfork River Canoe Route
Clubhouse Campground
North Star Campground
Rice River Canoe Route

Side two of the map will contain:

1. Large scale maps of:

- Suomi and Trout Lake SPNM
- Skeeter Lake, Spur Lake and Jingo Lake Hunter Walking Trails
- East Lake Pines Biotic Area.
- Miller Lake Geologic Area.

2. Pertinent user information on:

- Safety: hypothermia, travel itinerary, black bears, in case of mishaps, secure vehicle, personal flotation devices.
- Fishing: catch and release and where to go to catch what fish.
- Ethics: primitive sites, numbers, raking campfires, litter removal, tread lightly.
- Accessibility: large print information and braille
- Definition: ramp, carry-in, portage, primitive campsite.
- Exotics: Eurasion watermilfoil, purple loosestrife.

Seek to obtain the involvement of a partner such as the Chamber of Commerce to defray the cost of printing.

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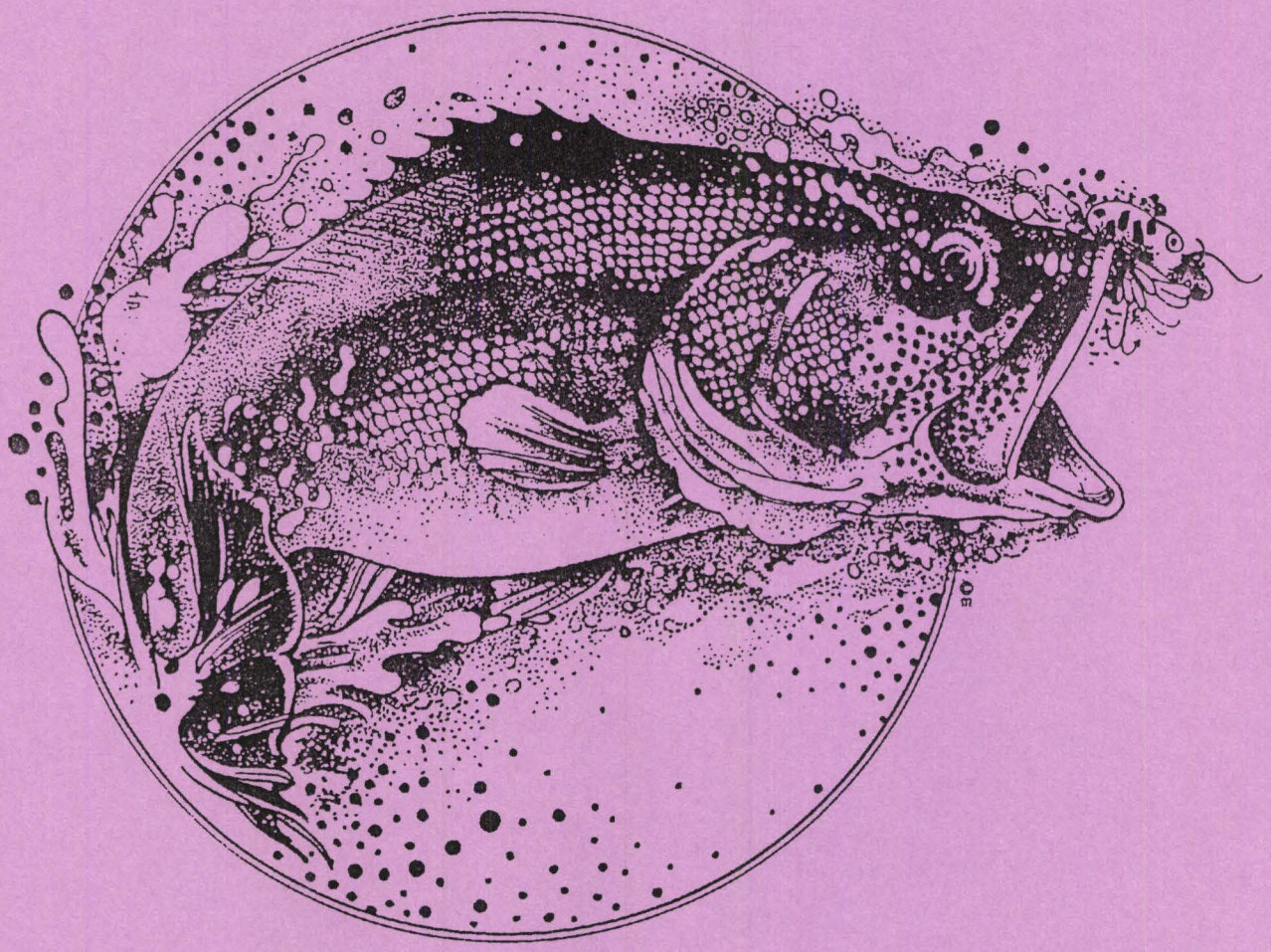
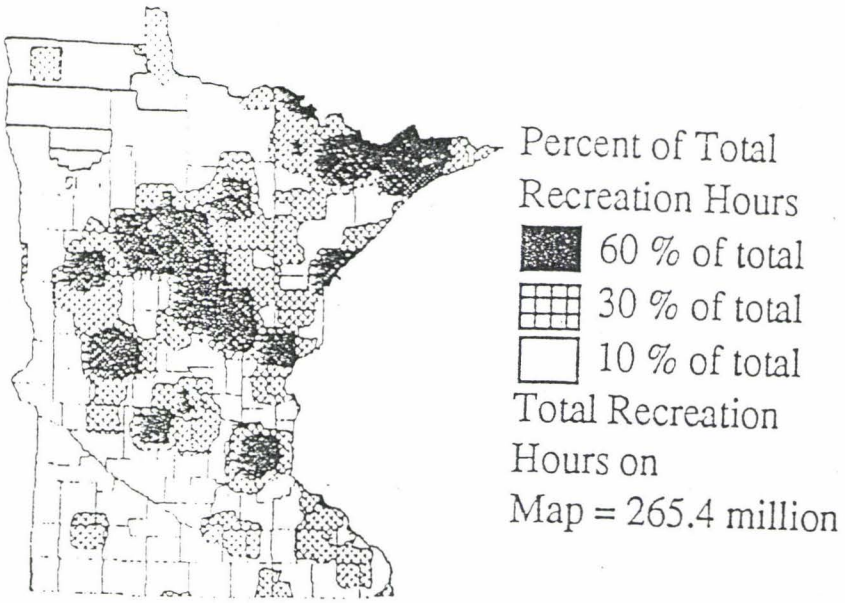
Appendices

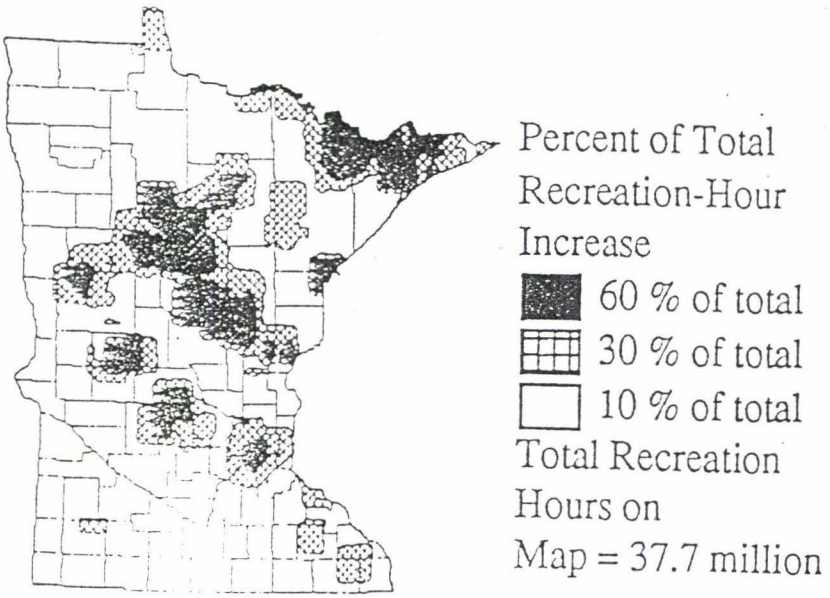


Minnesota Tourists and Nonresidents Combined

1985 Distribution



1985 to 2000 Projected Increase in Growth Areas



Appendix B

EIGHT WAYS TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR BROCHURE

By Mary Ellen Hammond and Jim Parham
America Outdoors Newsletter, Winter 1991

According to a 1989 survey conducted on the Nantahala River, the majority of whitewater rafting customers first learn about the company they patronize in one of two ways. They either hear about it from someone else, or they see a brochure. In fact, many folks can't remember which of the two it was. This makes sense, since word-of-mouth promotion often includes showing a piece of printed literature along with a verbal account of a personal experience.

A brochure functions as an ad, a fact sheet, a catalogue and a product price list all rolled into one. To that end, it should attract attention, describe the services accurately and clearly, include easy-to-find information, and provide enough appeal to cause the potential customer to dial the phone. Here are eight ways to make sure your most important marketing tool is doing its best for you.

1. **Put your major message up front.** Studies have shown that whether a brochure is received through the mail or plucked off a brochure rack, the average reader takes only a few seconds to glance at it and decide whether to read the information it contains. So put the most important thing you want to say on the front, and be sure the idea is clear, concise and as specific as possible.

2. **Keep the cover clean.** Once you've decided on the message, let it stand out. Don't make it compete with an 800 phone number in huge type, Visa and Master Card symbols, and directions from the nearest large city. Clutter creates visual confusion, and you want the reader to be clear enough about what you offer to take some time to look at the rest of the brochure.

3. **Use only the best photos.** The old chestnut, "A picture is worth a thousand words" is nowhere more true than in a whitewater rafting brochure. A sharp, colorful, exciting photograph is often what causes prospective customers to read what's in the brochure. Some even choose a company based on the pictures in the brochure. So use the best photos you can get If possible, use transparencies. Slides generally give a higher quality reproduction.

4. **Headline your most important features.** Highlight your most important features with a headline that's a statement. "We Welcome Groups" or "Groups Are Our Specialty" will attract more attention than information buried in a paragraph headed simply "Group Rafting."

5. **Present your information in more than one way.** Some people like to read the words and others will be more attracted by pictures, so present your information both verbally and visually to make sure everyone gets the message. If you want to sell your volleyball courts and camping facility, mention them in the text AND include a photo with a caption.

6. **Keep your copy simple and clear.** A common problem with outfitters who write their own brochure copy is that they have a hard time seeing what they've written from an outsider's point of view. What sounds entertaining and stylish to the outfitter can leave a prospective customer scratching his head, still looking for hard information. So if you write your own copy, stick to the facts, keep your sentences short and concise, and assume your reader knows nothing about your operation. Then ask someone, or several people, who are unfamiliar with what you offer to read the copy and get their feedback.

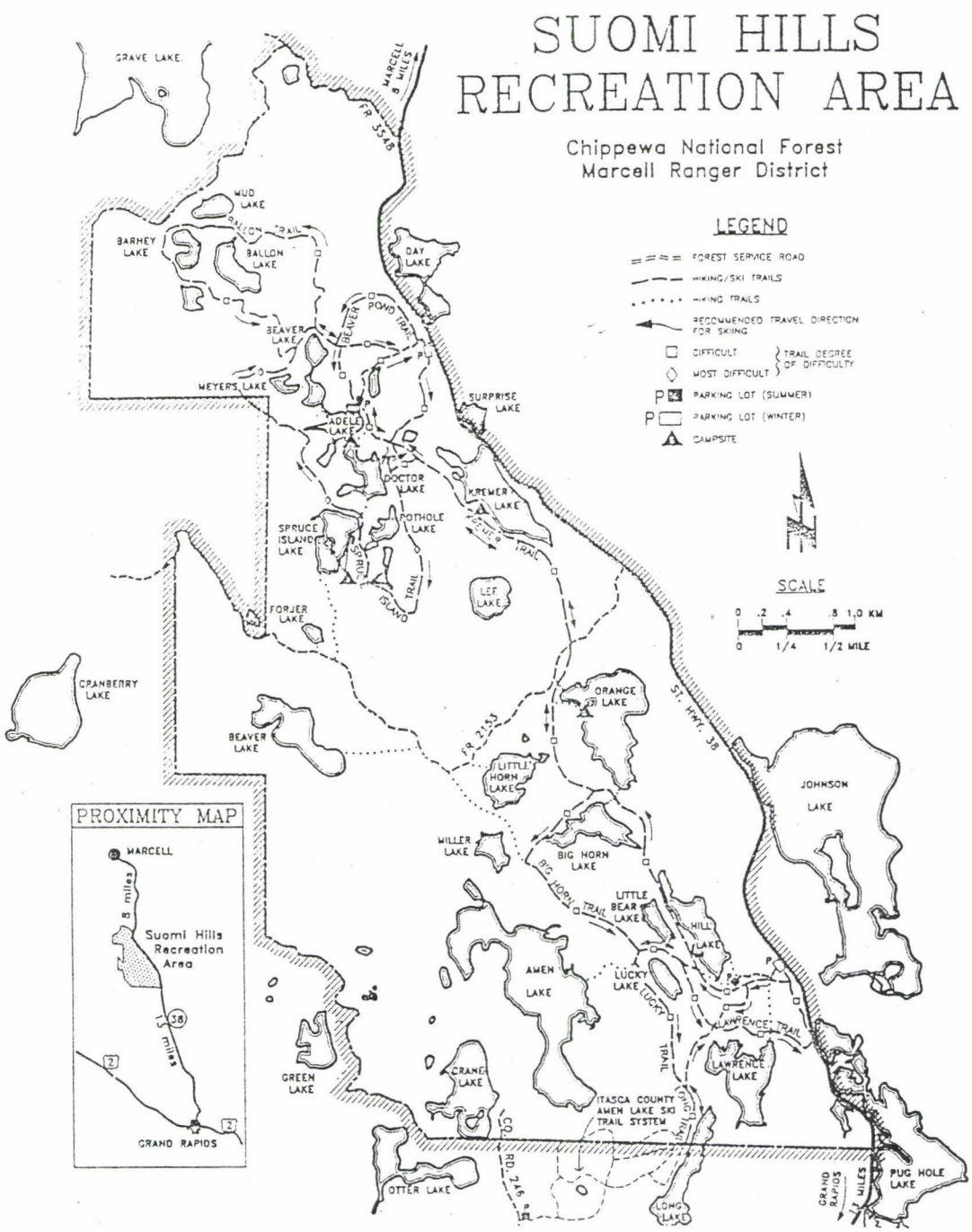
7. **Make sure it's up to date.** You may believe your three-year-old brochure is still doing a good job for you. Take a good look at it. Does it truly represent the services you are offering this season? Do the photos show your current equipment? Are you using the same river descriptions you came up with five years ago? Do your competitors' brochures read more and more like yours every season? Even the most innovative promotional piece can begin to look outdated after a couple of years. It pays to keep it current, to accurately reflect your company image and what you have to offer.

8. **Use A Professional Designer.** One of the very best ways to get your brochure to work for you is to hire a graphic artist to design it. We recommend finding one who is familiar with the whitewater industry, or at least whitewater sport. Professional designers are trained to organize information visually and will present words, illustrations and photographs to most effectively sell what you have to offer with efficient use of space. You may also want to consider getting a professional editor or writer to review your copy, or write it for you. This is probably the most reliable method of making sure it sounds clear and appealing to the customers you want to attract.

If you haven't used a professional designer in the past, you may think that hiring one now will be an added expense. But if your printer has been doing the design work for you, the cost of the design and paste-up has been added into your printing cost. Most printers offer design services only as a courtesy to customers, and charge healthy prices for them. If you're going to pay for design anyway, it's better to pay someone whose business is design, not printing. In fact, most printers would rather not have to handle design work at all!

The image created by your brochure may be the only image a prospective customer has of your company. It's worth putting time, effort and money into making the best of your most important marketing tool.

Mary Ellen Hammond and Jim Parham are the owners and principals of Whitewater Marketing Consultants, providing marketing and other consulting services to outfitters and other organizations in the outdoor recreation industry. Whitewater Marketing Consultants is based in Almond, North Carolina.



Being close to nature in a remote setting is what Suomi Hills semiprimitive nonmotorized area is all about. The rolling hills, lakes, and spectacular fall colors make this a special place.

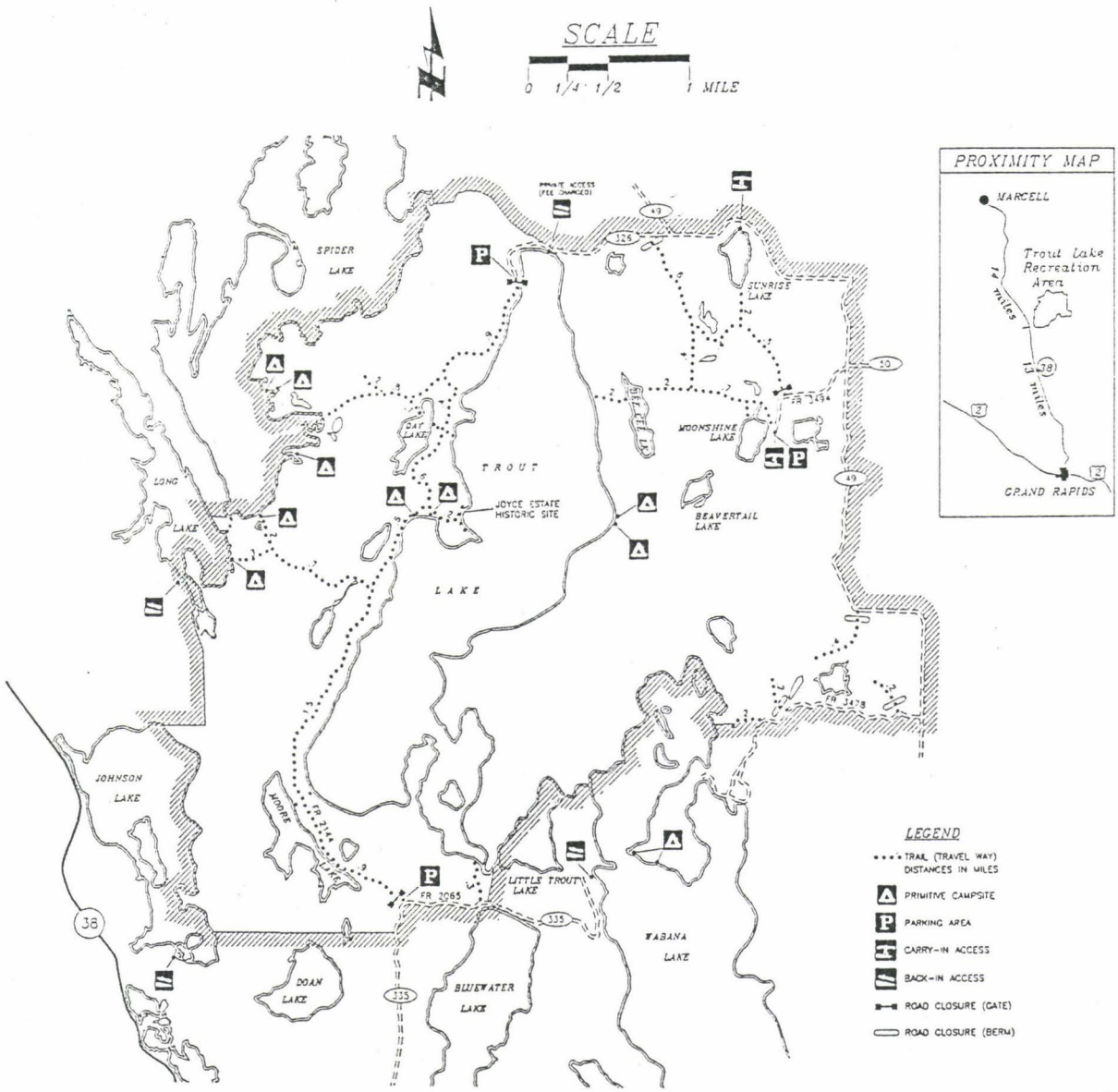
Suomi has 21 miles of trail, numerous small lakes and several primitive campsites for day or overnight hiking, biking, skiing, and canoe trips. The rolling topography offers cross-country trails and mountain bike trails for intermediate and advanced skiers and bikers. The trails are groomed and track-set in the winter and mowed in the summer.

Sightings of grouse, woodcock, white-tailed deer, bear, and perhaps even a bald eagle, osprey, coyote or timber wolf may high light you visit.

Access into Suomi Hills semiprimitve nonmotorized area is by foot and nonmotorized travel only.

TROUT LAKE RECREATION AREA

Chippewa National Forest
Marcell Ranger District



Welcome to the Trout Lake Recreation Area! This 6,000 acre tract includes pristine forests, endless shorelines and remnants of cultures that time has forgotten.

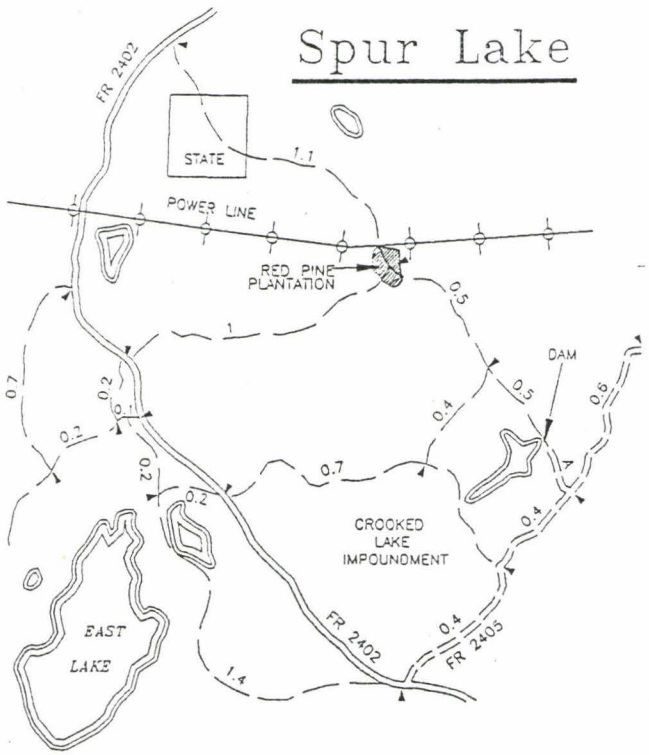
Travel along our trailways to the Nationally Historic Joyce Estate. Developed between the years of 1915-1937 by David Gage Joyce of Chicago, portions of the Joyce Estate stand today as a symbolic reminder of the "Great Camps" in the Adirondacks of New York. Heir to a family fortune built, in part, from lumber taken from northern Minnesota, Joyce was in a financial position to bring his plans and dreams of a grand summer retreat to fruitation. Although the local press continually referred to the estate as "a summer home" or "a private resort," the Joyces themselves named it "Nopeming" -- a Chippewa word for "place of rest."

We invite you to visit and share this "place of rest", to allow yourself to be swept back in time. Pack a picnic and plan on spending at least a half a day at the Joyce Estate.

Since the 1970s the Trout Lake Area has been managed as a Semi-Primitive Nonmotorized Area (SNA) by the Chippewa National Forest. Trout Lake SNA offers 26 miles of shoreline along 11 lakes. There are several miles of old roads and trails for hunting, hiking, and skiing. Primitive campsites are available on Spider, Trout and Wabana Lakes.

hunter-walking trails

Spur Lake



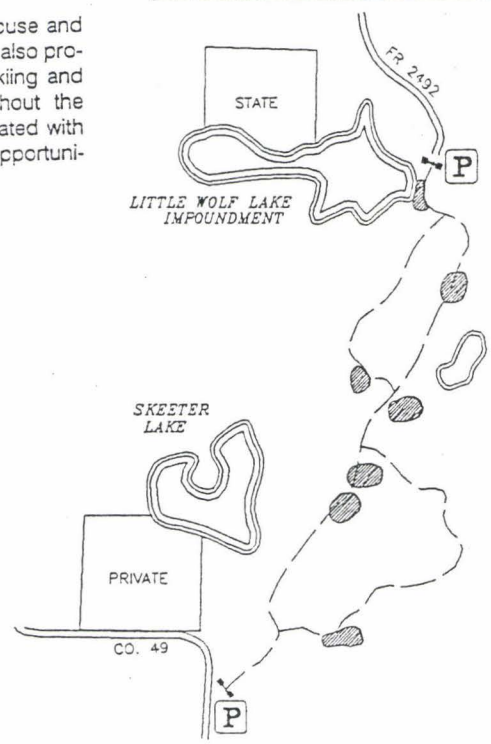
SCALE

0 1/8 1/4 1/2 MILE

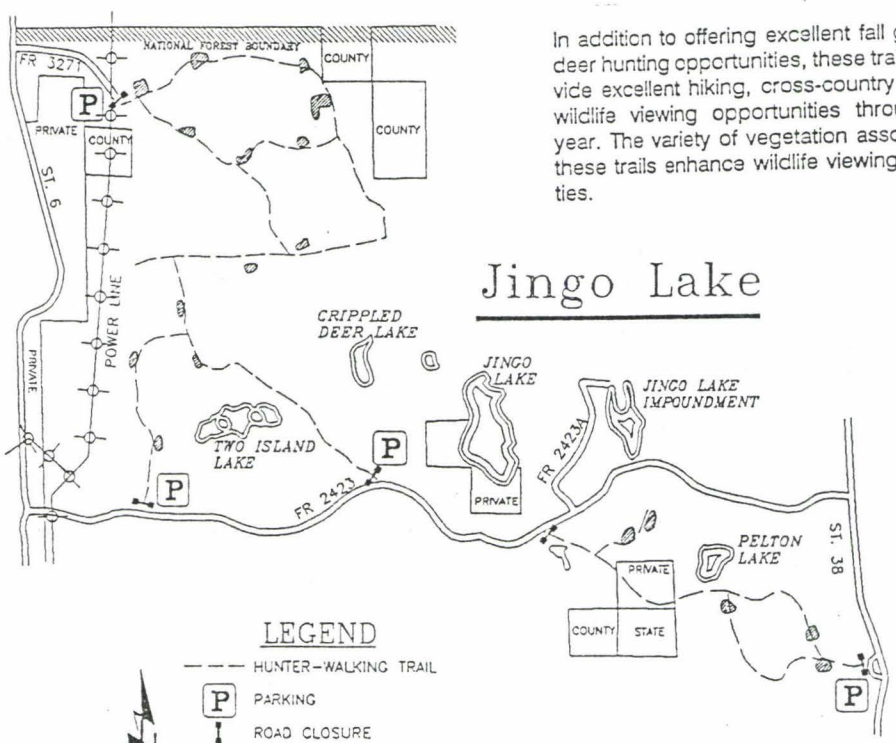
If you enjoy a quality hunting experience in areas where motorized vehicles are excluded, then hunter/walking trails are for you.

In addition to offering excellent fall grouse and deer hunting opportunities, these trails also provide excellent hiking, cross-country skiing and wildlife viewing opportunities throughout the year. The variety of vegetation associated with these trails enhance wildlife viewing opportunities.

Skeeter Lake



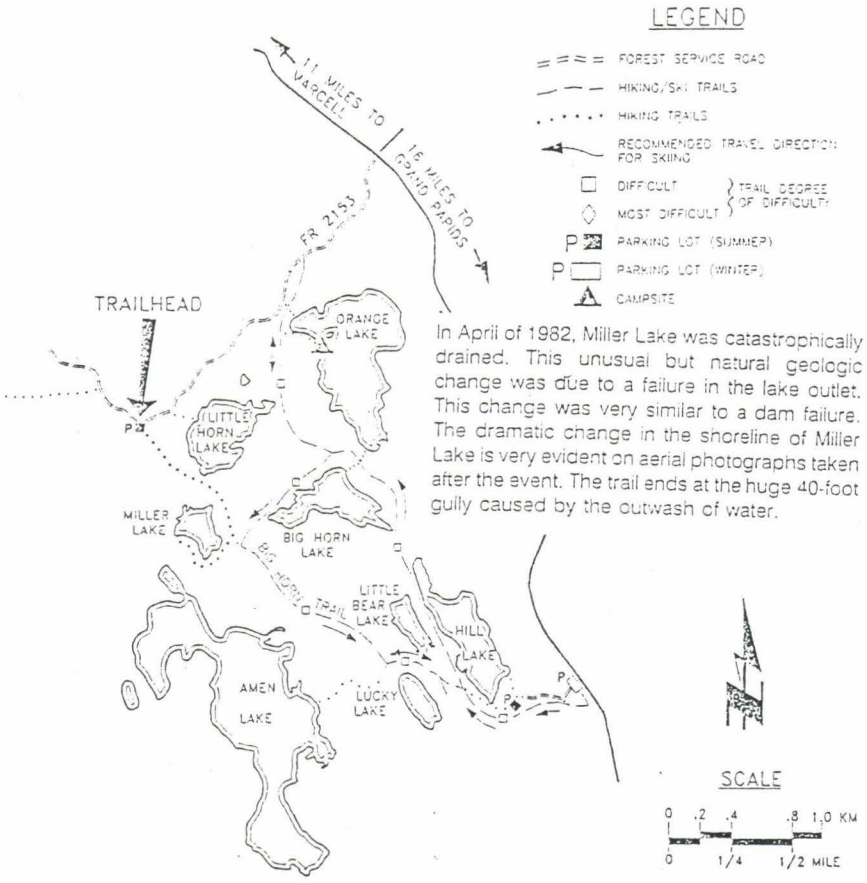
Jingo Lake



LEGEND

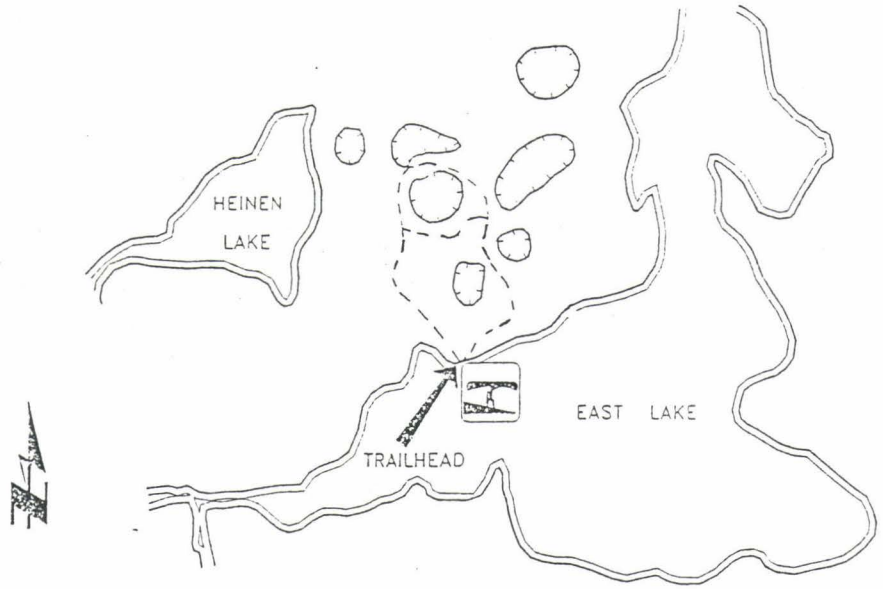
- HUNTER-WALKING TRAIL
- P PARKING
- ROAD CLOSURE
- OPENING

MILLER LAKE GEOLOGIC AREA

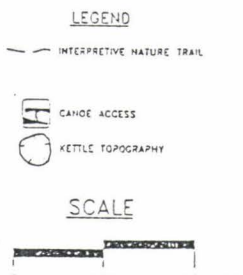


In April of 1982, Miller Lake was catastrophically drained. This unusual but natural geologic change was due to a failure in the lake outlet. This change was very similar to a dam failure. The dramatic change in the shoreline of Miller Lake is very evident on aerial photographs taken after the event. The trail ends at the huge 40-foot gully caused by the outwash of water.

EAST LAKE PINES



Hidden beneath these 200 year old pines lies glacial remains known as kettle topography. As recently as 12,000 years ago, glaciers passed through these lands, leaving evidence of their activity as huge collapsed pits (kettles) formed from buried chunks of ice that have now melted. As time progressed, Old growth red pine made way for interesting communities of birds and a variety of wildlife. Watch for signs, look, and listen!



Safety Considerations

MISHAPS ARE RARE, but

Should one occur, remain calm. Notify the Sheriff (911) or the Marcell Ranger District (832-3161). File a trip plan with family or friends so they know when you plan to return. Remember, Personal Flotation Devices are required for each occupant in a water craft.

REDUCE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CRIME

Locked vehicles are not completely safe. Leave valuables and unnecessary equipment at home.

HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia can occur in temperatures as high as 40 dgrees. To prevent wear layers of clothing and shed in layers. Wool is warmest and retains its qualities even if wet. Taking the chances of hypothermia seriously will ensure an enjoyable recreation experience.

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH BEARS

Never have food in tent
Store foods out of bears reach or in air tight containers.
Burn waste paper in your campfire
Do not burn or bury food scrapes
Remove garbage and fish remains from camp
Move to another campsite if fresh bear sign is present.

IF A BEAR COMES INTO CAMP

Don't feed it
Make loud noises, bang pans to scare it
Don't be gentle

If a bear makes threatening sounds, stands upright, or possibly bluffs a charge- YOU ARE TOO CLOSE.

WATER

If using lake water, it must be filtered or boiled for 2 minutes prior to consumption.

TURN KEEPERS INTO RELEASERS

We recycle everything these days. Why not fish? Catch and release is a voluntary program which encourages anglers to fish their favorite lake, and release the medium sized fish (the "keepers") so they can be caught again. Modern technology makes catching fish quicker than a lake can grow them. Think about it.

Fish can be caught and released following these simple rules:

1. Use barbless hooks.
2. Set the hook quickly-don't let fish swallow it.
3. Play the fish quickly.
4. Grasp fish at back of head firmly, but gently.
5. Use needlenose pliers to remove hooks.
6. Slide fish back into water.
7. Handle the fish as little as possible.

DEFINITIONS

Concrete ramp: an access with concrete planks that provides water access for most fishing boats by backing a boat trailer directly into the water.

Earth ramp: an access of native soil that provides water access for smaller fishing boats (14 feet or less) by backing the boat trailer into the water.

Carry-in: an access within close proximity of the water that provides for water access by off loading a boat and carrying it to the waters edge. The length of carry-in may be up to 250 feet.

Portage: an access trail that provides for water access by carrying the boat across a trail. A portage access may provide access from a road, parking area or another body of water.

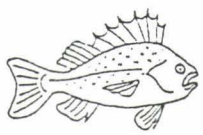
Primitive Campsites: individual campsites accessible by either land or water. Improvements vary with some sites having a picnic table, fire-ring, tent pad and a wilderness pit toilet while other sites have no improvements.

EXOTICS

Exotics such as Eurasian Watermilfoil, Purple Loosestrife, River Ruffe, and Zebra Mussel can rapidly ruin the lakes and wetlands we all are attracted to and enjoy. Learn to recognize these to prevent infestations and if discovered report to DNR or the Forest Service.

What else can I do? The spread of Eurasian watermilfoil can be slowed by removing all plant fragments from boats, motors, trailers, anchors, and disposing of them on shore, well above the water line.

Purple loosestrife is usually introduced into a watershed by humans who have planted it in their flower garden as it is a very pretty plant. It is a prolific seeder and spreads rapidly.



River ruffe

Carp, River Ruffe, Grass Carp, and White Perch harm fish populations, desireable plant growth, and water quality. Once introduced these are almost impossible to control.

Zebra Mussel clog municipal water intake lines, foul beaches and disrupt lake ecosytems. These are generally introduced accidently in bilge water or live wells.